



[4910-13-P]

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2012-0300; Directorate Identifier 2011-NM-276-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Fokker Services B.V. Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: We propose to adopt a new airworthiness directive (AD) for all Fokker Services B.V. Model F.28 Mark 0070 and 0100 airplanes. This proposed AD was prompted by a design review which revealed the absence of electrical insulation material between a wing or integral center wing tank (ICWT) fuel quantity indication system (FQIS) probe and the bottom of the tank structure. This condition, if not corrected, could, under certain conditions, result in an ignition source in the tank vapor space, which could result in a fuel tank explosion and consequent loss of the airplane. This proposed AD would require, for all airplanes, applying sealant below the FQIS probes in the wing tanks; and for certain airplanes, applying sealant below the FQIS probes in the ICWT. This proposed AD would also require revising the aircraft maintenance program by revising the fuel airworthiness limitations and incorporating critical design configuration control limitations (CDCCLs). We are proposing this AD to prevent an ignition source in the tank vapor space, which could result in a fuel tank explosion and consequent loss of the airplane.

DATES: We must receive comments on this proposed AD by [INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

ADDRESSES: You may send comments by any of the following methods:

- Federal eRulemaking Portal: Go to <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.
- Fax: (202) 493-2251.
- Mail: U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC 20590.
- Hand Delivery: U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

For service information identified in this proposed AD, contact Fokker Services B.V., Technical Services Dept., P.O. Box 231, 2150 AE Nieuw-Vennep, the Netherlands; telephone +31 (0)252-627-350; fax +31 (0)252-627-211; e-mail

technicalservices.fokkerservices@stork.com; Internet <http://www.myfokkerfleet.com>.

You may review copies of the referenced service information at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, Washington. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 425-227-1221.

Examining the AD Docket

You may examine the AD docket on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov>; or in person at the Docket Operations office between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this proposed AD, the regulatory evaluation, any comments received, and other information. The street address for the Docket Operations office (telephone (800) 647-5527) is in the ADDRESSES section. Comments will be available in the AD docket shortly after receipt.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Tom Rodriguez, Aerospace Engineer, International Branch, ANM-116, Transport Airplane Directorate, FAA, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, Washington 98057-3356; telephone (425) 227-1137; fax (425) 227-1149.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

We invite you to send any written relevant data, views, or arguments about this proposed AD. Send your comments to an address listed under the ADDRESSES section. Include “Docket No. FAA-2012-0300; Directorate Identifier 2011-NM-276-AD” at the beginning of your comments. We specifically invite comments on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of this proposed AD. We will consider all comments received by the closing date and may amend this proposed AD based on those comments.

We will post all comments we receive, without change, to <http://www.regulations.gov>, including any personal information you provide. We will

also post a report summarizing each substantive verbal contact we receive about this proposed AD.

Discussion

The European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Community, has issued EASA Airworthiness Directive 2011-0227, dated December 6, 2011 (referred to after this as “the MCAI”), to correct an unsafe condition for the specified products. The MCAI states:

* * * [T]he FAA published Special Federal Aviation Regulation (SFAR) 88, and the Joint Aviation Authorities (JAA) published Interim Policy INT/POL/25/12. The design review conducted by Fokker Services on the Fokker 70 and Fokker 100 in response to these regulations revealed that the absence of electrical insulation material between a wing or Integral Center Wing Tank (ICWT) Fuel Quantity Indication System (FQIS) probe and the bottom of the tank structure could, under certain conditions, result in an ignition source in the tank vapour space.

This condition, if not corrected, could result in a fuel tank explosion and consequent loss of the aeroplane.

For the reasons described above, this [EASA] AD requires the application of sealant below the FQIS probes in the wing tanks and below the FQIS probes in the ICWT, as applicable to aeroplane configuration. * * *

The corrective actions also include revising the aircraft maintenance program by revising the fuel airworthiness limitations and incorporating CDCCLs. You may obtain further information by examining the MCAI in the AD docket.

The FAA has examined the underlying safety issues involved in fuel tank explosions on several large transport airplanes, including the adequacy of existing regulations, the service history of airplanes subject to those regulations, and existing

maintenance practices for fuel tank systems. As a result of those findings, we issued a regulation titled “Transport Airplane Fuel Tank System Design Review, Flammability Reduction and Maintenance and Inspection Requirements” (66 FR 23086, May 7, 2001). In addition to new airworthiness standards for transport airplanes and new maintenance requirements, this rule included Special Federal Aviation Regulation No. 88 (66 FR 23086, May 7, 2001) (“SFAR 88,” Amendment 21-78, and subsequent Amendments 21-82 and 21-83).

Among other actions, SFAR 88 (66 FR 23086, May 7, 2001) requires certain type design (i.e., type certificate (TC) and supplemental type certificate (STC)) holders to substantiate that their fuel tank systems can prevent ignition sources in the fuel tanks. This requirement applies to type design holders for large turbine-powered transport airplanes and for subsequent modifications to those airplanes. It requires them to perform design reviews and to develop design changes and maintenance procedures if their designs do not meet the new fuel tank safety standards. As explained in the preamble to the rule, we intended to adopt airworthiness directives to mandate any changes found necessary to address unsafe conditions identified as a result of these reviews.

In evaluating these design reviews, we have established four criteria intended to define the unsafe conditions associated with fuel tank systems that require corrective actions. The percentage of operating time during which fuel tanks are exposed to flammable conditions is one of these criteria. The other three criteria address the failure types under evaluation: single failures, single failures in combination with a latent condition(s), and in-service failure experience. For all four criteria, the evaluations

included consideration of previous actions taken that may mitigate the need for further action.

The Joint Aviation Authorities (JAA) has issued a regulation that is similar to SFAR 88 (66 FR 23086, May 7, 2001). (The JAA is an associated body of the European Civil Aviation Conference (ECAC) representing the civil aviation regulatory authorities of a number of European States who have agreed to co-operate in developing and implementing common safety regulatory standards and procedures.) Under this regulation, the JAA stated that all members of the ECAC that hold type certificates for transport category airplanes are required to conduct a design review against explosion risks.

We have determined that the actions identified in this AD are necessary to reduce the potential of ignition sources inside fuel tanks, which, in combination with flammable fuel vapors, could result in fuel tank explosions and consequent loss of the airplane.

Relevant Service Information

Fokker Services B.V. has issued Fokker Service Bulletin SBF100-28-067, dated September 2, 2011. The actions described in this service information are intended to correct the unsafe condition identified in the MCAI.

FAA's Determination and Requirements of This Proposed AD

This product has been approved by the aviation authority of another country, and is approved for operation in the United States. Pursuant to our bilateral agreement with the State of Design Authority, we have been notified of the unsafe condition described in the MCAI and service information referenced above. We are proposing this AD because

we evaluated all pertinent information and determined an unsafe condition exists and is likely to exist or develop on other products of the same type design.

Costs of Compliance

Based on the service information, we estimate that this proposed AD would affect about 4 products of U.S. registry. We also estimate that it would take about 8 work-hours per product to comply with the basic requirements of this proposed AD. The average labor rate is \$85 per work-hour. Required parts would cost about \$0 per product. Where the service information lists required parts costs that are covered under warranty, we have assumed that there will be no charge for these parts. As we do not control warranty coverage for affected parties, some parties may incur costs higher than estimated here. Based on these figures, we estimate the cost of the proposed AD on U.S. operators to be \$2,720, or \$680 per product.

Authority for This Rulemaking

Title 49 of the United States Code specifies the FAA's authority to issue rules on aviation safety. Subtitle I, section 106, describes the authority of the FAA Administrator. "Subtitle VII: Aviation Programs," describes in more detail the scope of the Agency's authority.

We are issuing this rulemaking under the authority described in "Subtitle VII, Part A, Subpart III, Section 44701: General requirements." Under that section, Congress charges the FAA with promoting safe flight of civil aircraft in air commerce by prescribing regulations for practices, methods, and procedures the Administrator finds necessary for safety in air commerce. This regulation is within the scope of that authority

because it addresses an unsafe condition that is likely to exist or develop on products identified in this rulemaking action.

Regulatory Findings

We determined that this proposed AD would not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This proposed AD would not have a substantial direct effect on the States, on the relationship between the national Government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify this proposed regulation:

1. Is not a “significant regulatory action” under Executive Order 12866;
2. Is not a “significant rule” under the DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034, February 26, 1979);
3. Will not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska; and
4. Will not have a significant economic impact, positive or negative, on a substantial number of small entities under the criteria of the Regulatory Flexibility Act.

We prepared a regulatory evaluation of the estimated costs to comply with this proposed AD and placed it in the AD docket.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

The Proposed Amendment

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA proposes to amend 14 CFR part 39 as follows:

PART 39 - AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVES

1. The authority citation for part 39 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 106(g), 40113, 44701.

§ 39.13 [Amended]

2. The FAA amends § 39.13 by adding the following new AD:

Fokker Services B.V.: Docket No. FAA-2012-0300; Directorate Identifier
2011-NM-276-AD.

(a) Comments Due Date

We must receive comments by [INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF
PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

(b) Affected ADs

None.

(c) Applicability

(1) This AD applies to Fokker Services B.V. Model F.28 Mark 0070 and 0100
airplanes, certificated in any category, all serial numbers.

(2) This AD requires revisions to certain operator maintenance documents to
include new actions (e.g., inspections) and/or Critical Design Configuration Control
Limitations (CDCCLs). Compliance with these actions and/or CDCCLs is required by
14 CFR 91.403(c). For airplanes that have been previously modified, altered, or repaired
in the areas addressed by this AD, the operator may not be able to accomplish the actions
described in the revisions. In this situation, to comply with 14 CFR 91.403(c), the
operator must request approval for an alternative method of compliance according to

paragraph (j)(1) of this AD. The request should include a description of changes to the required actions that will ensure the continued operational safety of the airplane.

(d) Subject

Air Transport Association (ATA) of America Code 28: Fuel.

(e) Reason

This AD was prompted by a design review which revealed the absence of electrical insulation material between a wing or integral center wing tank (ICWT) fuel quantity indication system (FQIS) probe and the bottom of the tank structure. We are issuing this AD to prevent an ignition source in the tank vapor space, which could result in a fuel tank explosion and consequent loss of the airplane.

(f) Compliance

You are responsible for having the actions required by this AD performed within the compliance times specified, unless the actions have already been done.

(g) Apply Sealant

Do the actions specified in paragraphs (g)(1) and (g)(2) of this AD, as applicable.

(1) For all airplanes: At a scheduled opening of the fuel tanks, but not later than 84 months after the effective date of this AD, apply sealant below the probes in the wing tanks, in accordance with Part 1 of the Accomplishment Instructions of Fokker Service Bulletin SBF100-28-067, dated September 2, 2011.

(2) For airplanes having serial numbers 11442 through 11585 inclusive, and equipped with an ICWT: At a scheduled opening of the fuel tanks, but not later than 84 months after the effective date of this AD, apply sealant below the probes in the

ICWT, in accordance with Part 2 of the Accomplishment Instructions of Fokker Service Bulletin SBF100-28-067, dated September 2, 2011.

(h) Revise Maintenance Program

Before further flight after doing any action required by paragraph (g) of this AD, revise the aircraft maintenance program by incorporating the fuel airworthiness limitation and the CDCCL specified in paragraph 1.L.(1)(c) of Fokker Service Bulletin SBF100-28-067, dated September 2, 2011.

(i) No Alternative Actions, Intervals, and/or CDCCLs

After accomplishing the revision required by paragraph (h) of this AD, no alternative actions (e.g., inspections), intervals, or CDCCLs may be used unless the actions, intervals, or CDCCLs are approved as an alternative method of compliance (AMOC) in accordance with the procedures specified in paragraph (j)(1) of this AD.

(j) Other FAA AD Provisions

The following provisions also apply to this AD:

(1) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs): The Manager, International Branch, ANM-116, FAA, has the authority to approve AMOCs for this AD, if requested using the procedures found in 14 CFR 39.19. In accordance with 14 CFR 39.19, send your request to your principal inspector or local Flight Standards District Office, as appropriate. If sending information directly to the International Branch, send it to ATTN: Tom Rodriguez, Aerospace Engineer, International Branch, ANM-116, Transport Airplane Directorate, FAA, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, Washington 98057-3356;

telephone (425) 227-1137; fax (425) 227-1149. Information may be e-mailed to:

9-ANM-116-AMOC-REQUESTS@faa.gov. Before using any approved AMOC, notify your appropriate principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of the local flight standards district office/certificate holding district office. The AMOC approval letter must specifically reference this AD.

(2) Airworthy Product: For any requirement in this AD to obtain corrective actions from a manufacturer or other source, use these actions if they are FAA-approved. Corrective actions are considered FAA-approved if they are approved by the State of Design Authority (or their delegated agent). You are required to assure the product is airworthy before it is returned to service.

(k) Related Information

Refer to MCAI European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) Airworthiness Directive 2011-0227, dated December 6, 2011; and Fokker Service Bulletin SBF100-28-067, dated September 2, 2011; for related information.
Issued in Renton, Washington, on March 8, 2012.

Ali Bahrami,
Manager,
Transport Airplane Directorate,
Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 2012-7361 Filed 03/26/2012 at 8:45 am; Publication Date: 03/27/2012]